

there's another one, dresses dapper, smokes good cigars, but I know him, he never bets, he just pokes around in the trashcans for things, reaches his fingers into all those wet coffee containers, napkins, ripped tickets, old newspapers, stale hot dog buns, beer puke, he just reaches in there, inhaling on his cigar, a real freak.

then there's one who starts running when he sees something on the board late, they are putting them into the gate and he starts running toward the window like he's seen a message from the sky, and he's right, the last flash of the board is the most important but you can't win that way either, and he's so very poorly dressed and, come to think of it, I haven't seen him for some weeks now.

I think I've been around the track longer than any of them, I mean the bettors, maybe there are a lot of hot walkers, trainers, jocks who were there before me, well, maybe not the jocks but some of the hot walkers.

all my women (and there have been plenty of them) have said (as in one voice): "my god, every time you get drunk you start talking about the HORSES! you talk about the HORSES for hours! my god, what a dull subject! and there you write POEMS about the HORSES! my god, you don't know how dull your HORSE poems are! nobody understands them!"

here's another.

#### MY SOUL IS GONE

well, they warned me.

the phone rings.

I have just finished eating a grapefruit.

there are 3 telephones.

I pick up the one in the breakfast nook.

I am the man from the factories.

I am the one who has slept on park benches.

I am the one who tried 3 suicides and failed.

I am the one who lived with a half dozen whores.

I am the one who has been in two dozen drunk tanks.

I am the one who was accused of rape

and the one who was accused of draft dodging

when it was not the popular thing to do.

I pick up the phone: "yeh?"

"Bukowski?" he asks.

"yeh?"

it is the editor of one of the leading sex mags of our great nation.

"listen, we want you to write us a short story.

we haven't heard from you in a long time. what

you been doing?"



I bite into a piece of toast, well-buttered, then let him hear it around the mastication:

"screenplay, horses, drinking. yeh."

he answers: "well, send us something soon, will you?"

I say, "yeh." let the phone fall back into the cradle.

now I've got to dream up some realistic murder rape fantasy to make the people happy; it doesn't please me.

I open a couple of cans of cat food and I feed the cats. there are two of them.

one will only eat tuna.

the other just beef and hearts.

hardly park bench rape factory cats.

I look at them.

they bend over their dishes and show me their dry and ridiculous bungholes.

well, shit, now will I go to the racetrack or

will I rip off a quick sexy story for one grand?

upon the freeway I open the sun roof and my writer's locks blow in the 65 mph Calif. wind.

I can write it tonight, I can check the whores at the bar, they are all wearing these slit dresses now, slit right up to the hip, some wear panties, the best do not.

wheeling down Century listening to Mahler

I figure I can't be too bad

one day I read in the newspapers about this rock star who built a 4,000 gallon storage tank for gasoline and ordered a couple of extra 2,000 gallon tanks to be built

and then a few days later I read where he turned up at the International Whaling Commission with his guitar presenting a petition signed by a half-million Americans calling for an end to whaling, and he sang a song titled,

"I Want To Live."

the singer from Aspen, Colo., told a reporter:

"I'm not an expert but I have swum with whales and they are wonderfully friendly creatures, as interested in me as I am in them. I came here as a human being who celebrates life on this planet and hopes to share that life with all other creatures that live and breathe."

I am almost at the track.

I pull in, get valet parking.

all the attendants know me.

one of them hands me my parking tab.

asks: "how ya doin', champ?"

I grunt, give him a nod, climb out,

jerk my right shoulder just so,

climb out, clamber out,

give a slight glance to the right,

move off toward the clubhouse.